

edward johnson building
faculty of music
university of toronto



SCHOENBERG - WEBERN - BERG
CONCERT

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 1985
8 00 P.M.

WALTER HALL, EDWARD JOHNSON BUILDING

This concert is being presented in connection with a special Exhibition of photographs devoted to the lives and work of these three composers. This Exhibition will be on display at the Faculty of Music during the month of January, 1985.

The Faculty wishes to express its gratitude to Mr. F. Istl, Austrian Consul General, and Dr. L. Mautner, Canadian-Austrian Society of Toronto, for their kindness in providing this Exhibition.

PROGRAMME

FOUR SONGS, op.2

Alban Berg

Ingrid Attrot, soprano
John Hawkins, piano

PHANTASY FOR VIOLIN & PIANO, op.47

Arnold Schoenberg

David Zafer, violin
Sharon Krause, piano

CONCERTO, op.24

Anton Webern

- I. Etwas lebhaft
- II. Sehr langsam
- III. Sehr rasch

Contemporary Chamber Ensemble

Tara Cornish, flute
Peter Voisey, oboe
Brian Simpson, clarinet
Linda Bronicheski, horn
Robert Divito, trumpet
Lee Ann Milliken, trombone
Marc Sabat, violin
Marie-Claude Brunet, viola
Glenn Hodgins, piano
Philip Headlam, conductor

INTERMISSION

PROGRAMME NOTES
&
TEXT TRANSLATIONS

PROGRAMME NOTES

•FOUR SONGS, op.2 (1910), Alban Berg (b. Vienna 1885, d. Vienna 1935)

Written while Berg was in his early twenties, the Four Songs op.2 show many aspects of Berg's musical language which were subsequently to be developed in his more mature works. Berg's choice of poems is significant in that three of the four deal with visionary, dreamlike, or transcendental states of mind. These choices reflect the composer's obsession with and apparently intuitive grasp of transformational psychology. Even here, one can sense the composer of Wozzeck and Lulu at work, especially in the middle section of the dramatic fourth song, where the vocal line builds to a stylized "primal scream". (JH)

I Aus: "Dem Schmerz sein Recht". C.F. Hebbel (1813-1863)

Schlafen, Schlafen nichts als Schlafen!
Kein Erwachen, keinen Traum!
Jener Wehen, die mich trafen,
Leisestes Erinnern Kaum,
dass ich, wenn des Lebens Fülle
nieder klingt in meine Ruh!
nur noch tiefer mich verhülle,
fester zu die Augen tu'!

II. Drei Lieder aus: "Der Gluhende". A. Mombert (1872-1942)

1. Schlafend trägt man mich in mein Heimatland.
Ferne komm' ich her,
über Gipfel, über Schlünde,
über ein dunkles Meer
in mein Heimatland.
2. Nun ich der Riesen Stärksten überwand,
mich aus dem dunkelsten Land heimfand
an einer weissen Märchenhand,
hallen schwer die Glocken;
und ich wankte durch die Gassen
schlafbefangen.
3. Warm die Lüfte,
es spriesst Gras auf sonnigen Wiesen,
Horch! Horch! es flötet die Nachtigall.
Ich will singen:
Droben hoch im düstern Bergforst,
es schmilzt und glitzert kalter Schnee,

ein Mädchen in grauem Kleide lehnt an feuchtem Eichstamm,
krank sind ihre zarte Wangen,
die grauen Augen fiebern durch Dusterriesenstämme.
"Er kommt noch nicht.
Er lasst mich warten..."
Stirb!
Der Eine stirbt, daneben der Andre lebt:
Das macht die Welt so tiefschön.

TEXT TRANSLATIONS

I. From "To Pain its Right", C.F. Hebbel

To sleep, to sleep, nothing but sleep!
Not to wake, nor to dream!
Of those woes which once struck me,
Hardly even the faintest memory:
So that, when life's fullness
Echoes down to where I rest,
I may only enshroud myself more deeply,
And press my eyes more tightly shut.

II. Three Songs from "The Glowing One", A. Mombert

1. Sleeping, I am carried to my homeland.
I come from afar,
Over peaks, over gorges,
Over a dark sea
To my homeland.
2. Now I have overcome the strongest of giants,
Out of the darkest land I have found my way home,
Guided by a white, fabled hand;
The bells reverberate heavily,
And I stumble through the streets,
Caught in sleep.
3. Warm are the breezes;
From sunny meadows, grass is sprouting.
Listen, listen! The nightingale is piping.
I want to sing:
High up in the sombre mountain forest,
Cold snow is melting and glittering.
A girl dressed in grey leans against the moist
trunk of an oak;
Sickness is in her tender cheeks,

Her grey eyes gleam with fever, through the sombre
tree-trunk-giants.

"He has not come yet!

He lets me wait..."

Die!

One dies, alongside him the other lives;

This makes the world so deeply beautiful.

PHANTASY FOR VIOLIN & PIANO, op.47 (1949), Arnold Schoenberg
(b. Vienna 1874, d. Los Angeles 1951).

The Fantasy of the classical composers can often be regarded as a work of improvisational character, abounding in contrasts and changes of tempo and mood, in which the composer "pretended" to have lost his way in a free flight of fancy. But beneath the surface, this improvisation would be carefully organized. Schoenberg's Phantasy (his peculiar hybrid spelling) owes something to this interpretation. One of his most remarkable compositions, it shows Schoenberg as a highly original renewer of musical form. Somewhat like the Chamber Symphony, it combines a number of shorter, contrasting movements within a single movement. Commentators do not agree on the precise formal layout -- perhaps an unambiguous view would be at odds with the intended improvisatory style -- but the following is one interpretation: main section, slow movement (a b a), *grazioso*, slow movement (a b a), transition, scherzo (a b a), retransition, return of main section.

It is often said that Schoenberg wrote the entire violin part first, and added the piano part later. This would be peculiar if it were true; but Schoenberg's sketches show that the piano part was integrally conceived right from the start. Nonetheless, the point of the inexact contention retains its validity, for a primary concern of the composer was with the long line in the violin, all the way throughout the many contrasting sections. (In this respect, one may be reminded of certain of Beethoven's sketches in which preoccupation with the long line throughout is a foremost feature.) (EL)

"The Phantasy was written for and dedicated to the Toronto violinist, Adolph Koldofsky, who was then living in Los Angeles".

CONCERTO, op.24, Anton Webern (b. Vienna 1883, d. Mittersill 1945)

Due to the special nature of the tone-row of the Concerto, Webern employs no contrapuntal devices. Instead, all of the instruments play melodically, with the piano often serving as accompanist. As a result, Webern concentrates on a highly sophisticated rhythmic design for the first movement, and a driving rhythmic cell procedure for movement three. The subdued second movement offers strands of melody in specifically phrased dynamic levels. The Concerto was completed in 1934, and dedicated to

Schoenberg for his 60th birthday. (PH)

FOUR PIECES FOR CLARINET & PIANO, op.5, Alban Berg.

Although completed in 1913, the Four Pieces for Clarinet & Piano remained unperformed until 1919 when they were given by the Society for Private Musical Performances in Vienna. Certainly the most aphoristic and non-developmental of Berg's works, they represent a style which the composer abandoned in his subsequent compositions. The atmosphere of the pieces bears a striking resemblance to that of the Six Little Piano Pieces of Schoenberg, written in 1911 and undoubtedly studied by Berg. (JH)

FIVE CANONS, op.16 (1924), Anton Webern.

Webern was first and foremost a composer of vocal music. Here, since the voice and clarinets have the same lines, the individual characteristics of the voice and instruments are blended and disappear, perhaps symbolizing the underlying ideas of the poems. The strict, "pure" contrapuntal technique of canon was to become characteristic of Webern from about op.16 on, as, for instance, in the surprising use of canonic writing in the Symphony (1928). This technique not only affirms his close link with classical traditions, but also indicates his growing concern with securing a more conscious control of technical procedures, as distinct from a perhaps more intuitive approach in many earlier works. Thus, these Canons constitute a kind of invisible transition from Webern's "free atonal" idiom to op.17, his first 12-tone work. As always with Webern, the choice of texts reflects his inward religiosity and a serene joy in the beauties of nature. (EL)

I

Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem,
mortem autem crucis.

Propter quod et Deus exaltavit illum:
et dedit illi nomen,
quod est super omne nomen.

Christ for us became obedient unto death,
even the death of the cross.
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him
and given Him a name
which is above every other name.

II

(from "The Youth's Magic Horn")

Dormi Jesu, mater ridet,
quae tam dulcem somnum videt,
dormi Jesu blandule.

Si non dormis, mater plorat,
inter fila cantans orat:
blande veni somnule.

Sleep, my Jesus; mother smiles when
She can see you sweetly sleeping.

Sleep, my Jesus, tenderly.

When you don't sleep, mother weeps and
Plucks the strings and sings a prayer
Calling tender sleep to you.

III

Crux fidelis, inter omnes
arbor una nobilis:
nulla silva talem profert,
fronde, flore, germine.
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,
dulce pondus sustinet.

Faithful cross above all others,
one and only noble tree,
none in foliage, none in blossom,
none in fruit thy peer may be.
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron,
sweetest weight is hung on thee.

IV

Asperges me, Domine,
hyssopo, et mundabor:
lavabis me,
et super nivem dealbabor.
Miserere mei, Deus,
secundum magnam
misericordiam tuam.

Thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord,
with hyssop, and I shall become clean;
Thou shalt wash me,
and I shall be made whiter than snow.
Have mercy on me, O Lord,
in Thy great
loving-kindness.

V

Crucem tuam adoramus, Domine:
et sanctam resurrectionem
tuam laudamus, et glorificamus:
ecce enim propter lignum
venit gaudium in universo mundo.

We worship Thy cross, O Lord;
we praise Thy holy resurrection
and glorify it:
for behold, by virtue of the tree,
joy has come to the whole world.

THREE LITTLE PIECES FOR VIOLONCELLO & PIANO, op.11 (1914)

Anton Webern.

"Consider what moderation is required to express oneself so briefly. One can expand every glance into a poem, every sigh into a novel. But, to express a novel in a single gesture, a joy in a single breath: such concentration can only be present in proportion to the absence of self-pity." Schoenberg's remarks on Webern's Bagatelles of 1913 apply equally well to these Cello Pieces; and Klee's observation, "to become more precise, you have to impoverish" might also suggest the composer's concerns at that time. Eliminating repetition and development in the usual sense, these Pieces represent an extreme in sparseness and brevity. Their unique lyrical and poetic character springs from a musical structure in which every motive and phrase is complete and every detail precise, but concentrated and condensed to the smallest scale. (EL)

FIRST CHAMBER SYMPHONY, op.9 (1906), Arnold Schoenberg.

Webern made the present arrangement of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony in 1922-23; the work is generally performed in its original scoring for fifteen solo instruments. And Alban Berg published a "Thematic Analysis" of his master's work. He draws attention to the remarkable formal design of this work. On one hand, it comprises the four movements of the symphony: first movement, scherzo, slow movement, and finale. However, between scherzo and slow movement an extended development is interpolated, and the last movement, instead of presenting new material, recapitulates previous sections. On the other hand, Berg notes that one can also regard the work as a vastly expanded first movement, of tremendous breadth and sweep, in which the scherzo is interpolated between the exposition and development, and the slow movement between development and recapitulation. Berg identifies four main themes, including a fourth-chord horn theme, "stormily striding upwards", which underlie the entire work. These are continuously subjected to melodic, harmonic, and contrapuntal variation, and are combined to produce textures and harmonies of astonishing luxuriance, ranging in mood from serenity to flamboyance. This work must have had a decisive influence on Webern and Berg: one thinks, for example, of Webern's String Quartet with its dual formal meanings, or the cross-cut forms of Berg's Lulu. (EL)

PROGRAMME NOTES BY PROFESSORS EDWARD LAUFER, JOHN HAWKINS
AND MARYANNE PARKER-HALE

FOUR PIECES FOR CLARINET & PIANO, op.5

Alban Berg

- I. Mässig
- II. Sehr Langsam
- III. Sehr rasch
- IV. Langsam

Joaquin Valdepeñas, clarinet
Patricia Parr, piano

FIVE CANONS, op.16

Anton Webern

Ingrid Attrot, soprano
Joaquin Valdepeñas, clarinet
Richard Hornsby, bass clarinet

THREE LITTLE PIECES FOR VIOLONCELLO
& PIANO, op.11

Anton Webern

- I. Mässige Achtel
- II. Sehr bewegt
- III. Ausserst ruhig

David Hetherington, violoncello
Patricia Parr, piano

FIRST CHAMBER SYMPHONY, op.9

Arnold Schoenberg

Arranged for flute, clarinet, violin,
violoncello, and piano by Anton Webern

Virgina Markson, flute
Richard Hornsby, clarinet
Fujiko Imajishi, violin
David Hetherington, violoncello
Kathleen Solose, piano

NEXT EVENTS: Thursday Afternoon Series, January 17, 1985
2:10 p.m. Walter Hall
Lecture: "Driven into Paradise: Schoenberg's
American Years" by: Alan Lessem
Faculty of Fine Arts, York University

Saturday, January 26, 1985
U of T Symphony Orchestra, Cond Kazuhiro Koizumi
8 p.m. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Bldg.
\$5/\$3 students/seniors Box Office 978-3744

Sunday, January 27, 1985
U of T Wind Symphony, Cond Stephen Chenette
3 p.m. MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Bldg.
Admission Free